

Franklin County, PA Planning Department County Comprehensive Plan Update

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Release Date: May 21, 2021

Proposals Due: July 2, 2021

1. PROJECT PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Franklin County Planning Department seeks a solution-focused consultant with experience in comprehensive planning, community planning, civic engagement, and innovative problem-solving to assist the County with an update to the existing Comprehensive Plan: [Franklin Forward: The Comprehensive Plan for Franklin County, PA](#). The Planning Department is to be integral in the development of the new Comprehensive Plan. The plan will be developed through a partnership between the Planning Department and the selected firm. The prospective firm should outline how planning still will be involved in the planning process and formation of the implementation strategies and structure of the plan.

The successful consultant will work with the Franklin County Commissioners, the Franklin County Planning Commission (FCPC), staff, subcommittees, and municipalities to develop this plan with the County. Guided by the requirements of the PA Municipalities Planning Code, the new plan will incorporate changes since the current plan with respect to demographics, land use, housing, and economics.

The final project deliverable is an innovative, implementable comprehensive plan that incorporates web-based technologies and is an easily-accessible and understandable plan that will incorporate community involvement and provide a method to easily track and measure progress toward meeting our goals and objectives over the next ten (10) years. To this end, interim deliverables will include planning documents that have the support of the FCPC, Franklin County Commissioners and the municipalities. The plan must be strategic, thorough and achievable. In addition, it will provide the County and the local municipalities the framework and direction that addresses both the needs of our community and future growth.

For a more detailed vision of the County Comprehensive Plan update, please refer to Appendix A.

2. PROJECT TIMELINE

The Comprehensive Plan adoption is targeted for the Fall of 2022. Prospective firms must have the resources and capability of meeting the update timeline.

3. COUNTY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Franklin County is situated in south-central Pennsylvania along the Maryland border and at the convergence of several major highways including U.S. Route 11, U.S. Route 30, I-76 and I-81. Franklin County is a fourth class county comprising fifteen townships and seven boroughs. The County encompasses 772.22 square miles and has a 2019 estimated population of 154,147. The County provides a variety of public services and community programs to ensure the safety, health and welfare of its residents. With the diversity of its economic base, Franklin County residents enjoy the advantages of both urban and rural opportunities.

The County government operates under a three-member Board of Commissioners. Franklin County's mission is to enrich social, economic and environmental vitality. Franklin County provides services which are responsive to the health, safety and general welfare needs of County residents. The County government is dedicated to providing these services through the efficient and effective use of the County's available resources in an honest, open and caring manner. The County Planning Department focuses on initiatives aimed at maintaining a prosperous quality of life for the residents of Franklin County. Planning initiatives are being directed by a nine-member Planning Commission and a contingent of qualified planning staff.

4. RFP SUBMISSION

- a. Franklin County assures that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or in violation of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability, or in violation of any applicable local, state, or federal laws. With advance notification, accommodations may be provided for those with special needs related to language, speech, sight, or hearing. If you have a request for a special need, wish to file a complaint, or desire additional information, please contact Loretta McClure, Risk Manager at (717) 261-3819 or ljmcclure@franklincountypa.gov.
- b. The point of contact for purposes of this RFP is the Franklin County Planning Department Director referred to as Director as shown below:

Steven J. Thomas, AICP, Planning Director

Franklin County Planning Department

272 North Second Street

Chambersburg, PA 17201

Phone: 717-261-3855

Email: sjthomas@franklincountypa.gov

c. Pre-Submission Conference and Questions

A voluntary pre-submission virtual meeting will be held at **11:30 A.M. (EST/local time), on Thursday, June 3, 2021** to address questions from any interested firms. All questions will be documented in written form and posted on the Planning Department website following the meeting.

The meeting can be accessed here: <https://meet.google.com/vjh-dmvd-zkf>

While attendance at this meeting is not mandatory for those wishing to submit proposals, it is strongly encouraged and will be considered during proposal review and ranking.

The Planning Director will accept written questions from prospective responders **until June 18, 2021**. As reasonably as possible and appropriate, written responses will be prepared and distributed to all that have received or requested the RFP packet and a copy of the questions and answers will be hosted on the Planning Department website. Questions may be submitted by mail or, preferably, by e-mail to the Planning Director.

*The director/staff **will not** respond to telephone inquiries and **will not** meet individually with any potential consultants.*

d. Submission Deadline

In order to be considered, proposals must be received no later than 3:00 p.m. (Eastern Daylight Savings Time) on Friday, July 2, 2021, and shall be submitted to the Director at the email address listed in Section 4.b. Physical submissions will be accepted by an electronic version must be submitted to be considered.

All proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format via email or file sharing service to the Planning Director. Proposals arriving after the closing date and time shall be considered late and shall be rejected. Hard copy submissions will be accepted but are not required.

5. RFP RESPONSE CONTENT

- a. A transmittal letter must accompany the RFP submission. The purposes of this letter are to transmit the proposal, acknowledge the receipt of any addenda and to allow the firm an opportunity to indicate their ability to provide the services requested. The letter must contain the following information for the primary firm and any sub-consultants or partner firms:
 - Primary Contact Name
 - Primary Contact Address
 - Primary Phone and Email
 - Business Expertise (and level of inter-firm coordination if applicable)
 - Minority or Women-Owned Business Status (if applicable)
 - Identification of subcontractors or partnerships and clearly identified roles
- b. A narrative overview of how the responding firm will meet and develop the desired criteria contained within Appendix A: Vision, Qualifications and Experience. The narrative should specifically include:
 - how the firm will ensure the Vision statements are achieved throughout the process
 - how the firm will approach the partnership, with Planning Department staff playing an integral role in the development of the Comprehensive Plan
- c. A conceptual schedule serving to graphically depict milestone and benchmark dates for public input, reports, presentations and project progress. Please use a project completion date of October 31, 2022 for this portion of the submission.
- d. A list of key personnel employed by the consultant with corresponding titles and resumes provided as well as a list of the personnel that are anticipated to be assigned to the project along with their responsibilities, qualifications and experience. The principal point of contact should be identified. Additionally, the hourly rate for each identified person shall be provided.
- e. A proposed not-to-exceed budget which shall be based upon the Comprehensive Plan Requirements for Counties contained within the PA Municipalities Planning Code requirements; public meetings and public engagement strategies; steering committee attendance; and costs associated with achieving the Vision and Qualifications outlined in Appendix A. Cost proposals must be detailed and may include, as separate budget lines, other value-added planning best practices, innovative planning techniques or proprietary approaches to sound community and comprehensive planning that have not been outlined within this RFP. Cost proposals should also outline the final plan deliverables as well as interim deliverables as it relates to invoicing timing.

6. CONSULTANT SELECTION PROCESS

A selection committee shall review the submissions and develop a list of qualified responders to advance in the selection process. Interviews may be scheduled. The County reserves the right, at their discretion, to interview none, some or all of the applicants. In addition, the County reserves the right to request modifications to the proposals. Following the interview process, if applicable, the selection committee will recommend entering into a contract with the firm that best suits the needs and vision of the planning effort based upon the submission narrative, staffing, proposed cost and fit with County mission as referenced in Section 3. All contracts with the County of Franklin must be approved in a public forum by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners. A Notice to Proceed will be issued to the successful responder once the recommendation is approved.

7. CONTRACT PROVISIONS AND INFORMATION

After Franklin County makes its selection, it shall proceed to negotiate a contract at a mutually-agreeable price based upon a Scope of Work for the project. If the County is unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the selection committee's top firm, the County shall formally end negotiations with that firm and begin to negotiate with the next firm recommended by the selection committee. Negotiations shall continue in this sequence until a contract is agreed upon or if the County decides to re-post the RFP.

The performance of this contract shall be in accordance with all Federal, State and local laws as may be applicable. Any contract between Franklin County and the consultant shall be subject to the rules and regulations of any agencies funding this work. Additionally, in the event that Franklin County procures grant funding assistance, the contract shall contain all necessary provisions of that grant award contract. Franklin County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to waive irregularities.

The contract between the County and the selected consulting firm will include the following non-negotiable contract provisions:

1. Indemnification of the County
2. Non-indemnification of the contracted firm
3. Forum selection (Franklin County, PA Court of Common Pleas)
4. Choice of Law (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
5. Termination for convenience / termination for cause by the County
6. Work-for-Hire Transfer of Copyrights / Intellectual Property
7. County ownership of the instruments of service / deliverables / data
8. Prevailing party attorneys' fees

9. Non-discrimination
10. Suspension and debarment
11. Release of liability of the contractor
12. Insurance coverage and County status as an additional insured
13. Terms of payment and invoicing, including 45 day payment period
14. Data security, confidentiality, and use of County data and information
15. Any and all federal and state contract provisions required as a result of grant funding

The County reserves the right to request additional contract provisions it deems necessary as needed to protect the best interest of the County.

A separate "Data Sharing Agreement" will be signed by the selected firm and the Franklin County GIS Department upon a Notice to Proceed being issued.

8. RFP COMMITMENT, CANCELLATION, AND INCURRED EXPENSES

This Request for Proposals offers no commitment of funding or contractual obligations until such time as the selected firm and Franklin County settle on a mutually agreeable Scope of Work and Project Budget and commit to both via a publicly approved contract by the Board of Commissioners. Additionally, the RFP does not commit Franklin County to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the submittal, or to procure or contract for services.

The County reserves the right to negotiate with all qualified responders, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this request for qualifications, if it is in the best interest of the County to do so.

Request for Proposals - Appendix A

Vision, Qualifications and Experience

May 2021

Franklin County desires to contract for qualified professional services to assist the County in the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The County seeks a qualified, solution-focused consultant team with demonstrated professional planning, economic analysis, government services analysis, and economic development experience. The Vision, Qualifications and Experience outlined below presents a minimum effort expected by the consultant selected for the project and will be used as part of the evaluation matrix in selecting a preferred consulting firm.

OUR VISION

The Franklin County Planning Department fully envisions this Comprehensive Plan update to be groundbreaking and cutting edge compared with previous ventures. Gone are the days of 300+ documents that simply hold up other 300+ page documents. The Planning Department envisions a product that clearly and concisely identifies the issues currently facing the County and those that may arise in the future. The Plan will then address the problems in a holistic manner, not the typical “silo” approach of many comprehensive plans. The Comprehensive Plan is a tangible, living document with clear, realistic goals that have achievable objectives and measurable indicators of that achievement outlined. The Planning Department envisions a product that is easily accessible and understandable by the general public and is presented in a format that is easily read and used by the Department, the County and the public at large via a number of digital media.

To further clarify the Vision, the Planning Department intends to develop the Comprehensive Plan with the following vision statements in mind:

- The Plan will focus on problems faced by the County and implementable action steps and measurable indicators of progress to provide solutions; the Plan will not be developed in a traditional “silo” approach
- The Plan will be implementable, with a limited selection of achievable objectives as opposed to a lengthy goal list that is not attainable within the 1-year time frame
- The Plan is to be created in ArcHUB or ArcStoryMap so as to better facilitate access and ease of use

- The Plan is to be created in a visually engaging and attractive manner and formatted with a keen eye towards graphic design appeal. It will include formats optimized for digital applications, including websites and mobile devices
- The Plan will seek to identify and incorporate innovative and contemporary, collaborative planning techniques into the methods, goals and objectives
- The Plan will set a framework for the County's municipalities to develop and adopt their own regional comprehensive plans with strong ties back to the County's plan; municipal and school district outreach will be a key component of the plan development process
- The Plan will involve specific and value-added citizen engagement, especially among traditionally disadvantaged groups such as low-to-moderate income, minority and limited-English proficiency populations
- The Plan will strategically incorporate other County planning initiatives into the overall development and implementation strategies, such as the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Housing Inventory and Analysis and the Greenways and Open Space Plan
- The Plan will be developed cooperatively with the Planning Department and GIS Department staff as this is viewed more as a partnership than simply handing off the comprehensive plan to be written by the consultant team
- The Plan will be developed with the understanding and framework of being easily updated by Planning Department staff in the future
- The Plan will identify some of the known impacts of COVID-19 on Franklin County and attempt to identify future long-term impacts and suggest solutions designed to reduce the COVID-19 impact and address future pandemic mitigation measures.
- The final Plan end product will include a 15 to 20 page Executive Summary

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The evaluation of prospective consulting firms will be based upon the following qualifications and experience criteria:

- Previous experience (no more than three projects) preparing comprehensive or community plans for Pennsylvania counties with a description of each project
- A qualified contingent of staff, either within the primary firm or within if the subcontractor firm (if applicable) with relevant skills, qualifications and backgrounds as related to comprehensive planning
- Demonstrated experience preparing comprehensive plans in accordance with the PA Municipalities Planning Code
- Ability to utilize contemporary mapping techniques and applications to collect and analyze pertinent data and present data in visually-appealing and compelling manner
- Demonstrated experience with the ESRI suite of products including ArcHUB and StoryMaps along with HTML and Javascript knowledge
- Demonstrated experience in performing a variety of analysis, including but not limited to: economic market analysis, real estate market analysis, fiscal impact analysis, land use and environmental resources analysis
- Experience utilizing innovative and engaging public relations and public engagement techniques along with graphic design skills to create contemporary public-facing, digital-friendly and multi-media materials
- Ability to conduct comprehensive inventories of resources and assets such as housing availability, environmental resources, community facilities, infrastructure (water, sewer, roads) and land use patterns
- Demonstrated experience in coordinating county-level planning efforts with local municipalities, authorities, agencies, non-profit organizations and businesses
- Ability to incorporate existing municipal plans and efforts into a county comprehensive plan
- A demonstrated understanding of rural planning issues with appropriate efforts and initiatives to address them